

Don't Let Mosquitoes Ruin Your Summer

Summer time in PA means many things, most of them positive like BBQ's, trips to the lake, and hiking our many beautiful trails and parks. Unfortunately, ask anyone from PA and they will tell you that summer also means mosquitoes! Yes, those pesky little insects that always seem to be buzzing about while we enjoy all the summer activities we love. This year it's more important than ever to practice caution when it comes to protecting you and your loved ones from bites.

Why should we worry about mosquitoes?

Thankfully, here in Harrisburg we don't really need to worry about mosquitoes carrying some of the diseases that are more common in tropical climates (guess that snow is good for something), but we do need to protect ourselves from diseases that have appeared in the region in the past and will most certainly appear again in the future. One such disease that is spread from contact with an infected mosquito is West Nile Virus, which is the leading cause of mosquito-borne disease in the US. While most people who are infected with the virus will not experience any noticeable symptoms, some are not so fortunate. Some symptoms of a West Nile Virus infection are fever, vomiting, body aches, diarrhea, and rashes. More severe symptoms can include inflammation around the brain and spinal cord.

Who is most at risk?

While everyone is at risk from an insect transmitted disease, it's important to take extra precautions to protect the most vulnerable among us. Those who are over 60 years of age are at increased risk of severe illness from West Nile Virus. Young children are also at risk and every step should be taken to ensure they are not exposed to mosquitoes as best as possible.

How Can We Protect Ourselves From Mosquitoes

While it can be difficult to go all summer without coming into contact with mosquitoes, there are several precautions you can take to limit your exposure to them:

1. Wear long sleeved shirts and pants when possible, especially in the cooler evenings when mosquitoes can be quite active.

2. Put screens on your windows and use air conditioning to limit the chances of mosquitoes entering your home.
3. Use EPA - registered insect repellent, when spending time outdoors even if you only plan to be outside for a short period of time.
4. Ensure there is no standing water around your home. Standing water provides a fertile breeding ground for mosquitoes and can affect the areas around your home for miles.

Final Words

Summer isn't a time to be worried about anything other than getting a sunburn or mowing the grass. With a little planning and the proper bug spray close at hand you can continue to enjoy the world class summer activities that Pennsylvania has to offer.

For more information visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/nczid/dvbd/media/stopmosquitoes.html>

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